



Pause for Breath, 19-23 March 2012, Scotland

Exploring mindfulness and dialogue in leadership

About you...

In my practice as an executive coach, I hear leaders say:

"I'm constantly fire-fighting"

"I feel like a hamster in a wheel"

"I don't have time to think"

If you feel that you are caught up in relentless activity, imagine a week with purposeful time and space to take stock, reflect, and work with mind and body to more readily access your deeper wisdom. Imagine the delight of your colleagues (not to mention your family) when you return with a calm, energised presence and greater resilience.

Pause for breath. Pause...and bring mindfulness to your leadership.

This restorative week in Eskdalemuir blends exploration of models from dialogue practice with embodied activities drawn from the principles of t'ai chi and aikido. This combination of light physical movement and cognitive activity will refresh your mind, body and leadership spirit. Working with others, you will become more aware of your habits of thinking, talking and listening. We will examine how conversations get stuck, and how you can embody skilful dialogue practices to cultivate fruitful exchanges with others. We will adopt purposeful, powerful practices which you will be able to deepen after the retreat, for your own benefit and for the benefit of those around you.

To participate, you need only have a sense of curiosity and a willingness to explore the unfamiliar - no previous experience of dialogue or embodied work is required! As we work, talk, live and laugh together, you will be prepared to risk changing your breathing, your thinking, your presence and your habits of conversation in order to nourish and sustain your leadership spirit.

About me and embodied work...

I practice t'ai chi with Five Winds School in Edinburgh (www.five-winds.co.uk). From the outset, my understanding of dialogue has been influenced by my experience of this martial art. Pause for Breath is the manifestation of my passion to explore connections between these apparently different disciplines. For more, see the 'about' page.

Together...

In a venue selected for simplicity, comfort and tranquillity, we meet for lunch on Monday and use the afternoon for introductions to each other and to embodied work. Each morning begins with gentle movement and breath awareness, followed by work with some key elements of dialogue practice. After a generous lunch break, our focus is practice-based to support deeper awareness of our leadership voice and presence. There may be energy for evening dialogues.

You are encouraged to navigate the week in a way that meets your own learning style. There will be scope for both group learning and individual time and space for reflection and processing. We say our goodbyes over lunch on Friday, allowing time for a relatively relaxed journey home for the weekend. The practices you encounter in this week will enable you to develop resilience in your leadership spirit over the long term.

Practicalities...

Dates/times: registration before midday on Monday 19 March 2012 – in time for lunch – and leaving from 2pm on Friday 23 March 2012, after lunch.

Number of places: 16, minimum 10

Location: in a purpose-built retreat house in the Borders of Scotland.

Accommodation: in single rooms with shared facilities.

Registrations: please email me at info@originate.org.uk for more information and a booking form.

Optional extra...coaching support

If you wish to gain further value from your participation in this retreat, I invite you to consider a short series of telephone coaching sessions to support you in preparing for the retreat, and then in embedding your learning and practices.

Participant experiences

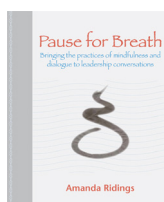
The retreat attracts diverse participants. Reasons for signing up include: to find my heart and my courage; to learn how to relax, and properly recharge the batteries so I can have a better focus on the things I have to do and the changes I need to make in my life; time to really discover me, find my leadership voice and get in touch with my essence in a more visceral way; and to step back, reflect, ponder, find perspective.

A leader in public services, funded the week herself and said: “it was better than a holiday - the link between the mind and body was revelatory. I have a greater understanding of what’s going on inside me in stressful situations and this is a starting point for handling them.”

A CEO from the NHS said “a true breath of fresh air, exhausting and exhilarating at the same time. I found real strength and energy from the connection between mind and body and how to use that energy and focus to cope with everyday situations never mind the stressful ones!”

Another participant said “I have had deeper insights and more powerful experiences than I have ever had on a course or during my working life. The ripples and resonances from this one week will be felt throughout my life.”

An experienced Executive Coach wrote: “it provided much needed respite from relentless activity, and emotional storms. It offered time and space to find my place of calm, centred, balance, and to regain my perspective. This work is clearly close to Amanda’s heart and I found this to be inspiring and engaging.”



A participant wrote: “the book enhances the whole experience by acting as a reference material that can be dipped into again and again, reinforcing the learning and helping to embed it into everyday conversations with others.”